

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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INTERIOR OFFICIAL APPEALS FOR STRICT OBSERVANCE OF LIBERALIZED WATERFOWL HUNTING RULES THIS FALL

A high Interior Department official today urged hunters of wild waterfowl to observe regulations on bag limits this autumn stringently, and promised that strict enforcement would be sought nationwide against violators.

"Because of two unusually favorable breeding seasons in a row," said Dr. Leslie L. Glasgow, Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, "several duck species have reached their highest population levels since 1960. Liberalized Federal "framework" regulations will allow many State game commissions to adopt larger bag limits and longer seasons than hunters have enjoyed in more than a decade.

"In past years, with more restrictive regulations, the number of birds taken have far exceeded legal limits in some regions of the country. Now that we are able--with a big assist from Nature--to adopt more permissive rules, we expect hunters to respond positively, by rigorously respecting legal limits and reporting violations they observe.

"Only in this way can the responsible hunter protect this great wildlife resource for everyone's enjoyment in future years. We are urging game control agents across the country to seek strong penalties against those whose misbehavior ruins respect for law and impairs future waterfowl abundance," Dr. Glasgow said.

The Assistant Secretary said he had instructed Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife to use "all the resources at its command," including airboats, helicopters, and airplanes, and to coordinate their enforcement activities with all State game and fish personnel more closely than ever.

"The new framework regulations announced August 16 are designed to place the heaviest hunting pressure on the most abundant species," he said. "In a well-regulated program the birds bagged by hunters substitutes for losses due to natural mortality. Compliance with regulations will help insure the return of an adequate breeding population to the prairie pot-holes in the spring of 1971."